

fragments of
intifada
in tunisia and egypt

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the beautiful destruction be wrought.

Some of the tactics they shared, says Foetus, the codename for a member of Takriz, “have roots in long-standing contacts with anarchist and international protest groups like Indymedia, the Antifascist Network, and CrimethInc. For example, the technique called “Black Bloc”—having protesters wear black clothing en masse for impact and anonymity, with padding and protection to reduce injuries—dates back to 1980 in Germany.”

Here, the potentiality of a becoming-together of the spirit of the Riot and the antagonisms of the Occupation remain an open chance for us- in this Global Intifada.

The cyclones of struggle blast this world apart. Although there are periods that the state of siege regains the social peace- any moment that will explode, and again the streets will fill with fire. In this epoch we cannot allow the memory of the dead to be stolen. We stand as the Mothers of the martyrs who hold vigil in the midst of street battles.

Over the last year the insurrection has not ceased in Egypt or Tunisia, overcoming the billions of dollars empire spends (Canada \$20 million) on counter-insurgency- in the form on elections and ‘democratic-institution building’. This apparatus of capture is the same network of regulation we battle here. The institutionalization of crisis is best dealt with by the methods deployed throughout the ‘Arab spring’- that is, the absolute destruction of institutions and the armed exodus from the reifying radiation left in their wake. In Tunisia and Egypt I was witness to the ‘fired’ shells of bureaucratic control. The revolted will not trade in their looted weapons (93 cop shops and over 300 military barracks sacked in Egypt alone) for the opportunity to vote. And they have not abandoned the struggle against imperial democracy.

Almost everyone I met over there, I asked, ‘what will you do when the state steals your revolution?’ The unanimous response was, ‘We will just have another one!’ Last month in Sidi Bouzid, the town from where the uprising in Tunisia began, the multitude set fire to the headquarters of the winning political party, the day after the election. Such will

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(though not exclusively) young male and socially marginal.

But the frontline and the Meidan are also part of one whole. The frontline's position is to protect the Meidan, even if it also developed into a fight for its own sake. Without the on-the-ground crowd of ultras and the wilad sis prepared to stop police violence with their own bodies, and most importantly, to hit back, the largely middle-class opposition could not have held the Meidan for long."

Was this violent defense not also the case for Occupy Vancouver? As made clear by Zig-Zag, it was the fear of the chaos brought forth in the 2011 riots that forced the city to keep their pigs on a leash. Anyone who was present at both riot and occupation know the difference was not only the communication of destruction- but also the communication of Counter Power.

The insurrections last year that has created this global intifada, was the becoming of a new solidarity between the pro-revolutionary's and the rioting hoodlums. Such commonality was developed over years of relationships initiated by a militant underground group in Tunisia called Takriz, (its closest translations is, 'breaking my balls' or 'bollocks to that')

Realizing the advantage in working with Ultras as opposed to the same-old leftist shit- over several seasons they developed a Web forum for Ultras from different teams, hosted by Takriz. This allowed for years of mutual agitation, so that come the rupture is was a lightning transition from riot to insurrection

The ultras were also on Egypt's streets at first crack. On January 24, the day before thousands planned to protest the Mubarak regime, the Ultra Facebook pages sent out a message saying, "We're not political, we're not part of this as an organization—you as individuals are free to do whatever you want (...) This is what we've been preparing for."

There were also e-mails with attachments describing how to deal with the military—"an Ultra thing from Tunisia," remembers Kotb Hassaneen, an Alexandrian insurgent.

observation from Lucie Ryzova, an engaged-blogger during this last battle:

“It is in Abdeen, the streets east of Tahrir Square between Muhammad Mahmoud Street and Meidan Bab al-Luq, leading to the ministry of interior, where a battle was waged during the past week.

And a battle it was. People went there knowing what they were getting into. They went there to fight. Police threw teargas canisters and used shotguns (occasionally also live ammunition); against them was a line of young men mostly throwing stones, but also Molotov cocktails and small homemade bombs.

It was a “battle for the dakhiliyya [‘the Ministry of Interior’]”, but that does not mean that any of the young men facing the police necessarily wanted or intended to take over the ministry’s building. It was a symbolic battle – or more precisely, a frighteningly real and bloody fight over a symbolic location; the fight itself was the message.

The khatt al-nar [‘firing line’] belonged to particular people who went there to beat and get beaten. Throughout the first week of the Second Revolution, Tahrir Square and the battle zone to its east each had its own demographic.

Each was a different crowd, but they can only be understood as a symbiosis – a specific social alliance – as both constructed and supported each other, and they increasingly overlapped. The square, the “safe” zone, contained a truly socially mixed crowd. People from all walks of life came there, often several times a day, in support of those who decided to camp out, to help “hold” the square and support its cause.

One saw a social mix rarely seen in Egypt (though it was famously present in the First Revolution): middle-class men and women, some of them activists but most of them not; young and old, in suits, kefiyehs and jeans, alongside the galabiyas and long beards of the salafis; bareheaded women as well as munaqqabat (fully veiled women).

On the front line, by contrast (and naturally so given the nature of the battle), the demographic was predominantly

tunisia: multitude in revolt



The situation in Tunisia is a rupture brought into being by the militancy of the multitude. There is no party or leadership, no unions or even a class that has forced this situation – rather, it is a multitude. The multitude defined not as the people, not a mass, not as a set of individuals. It is defined as a network of singularities, where these singularities – in order not to become reduced to chaos – recognize themselves in a common that extends beyond them. The intensity with which power is being swarmed by the multitude clearly articulates the militant position. The fact that the hole blown wide open has not been filled by oppositional political stand-ins, or suppressed by military might shows the potential flight this situation is in the process of becoming – the reproduction of the insurrectionary situation that brings into being a maximally revolutionary event that until such rupture did not exist, and in fact seemed impossible just prior (–‘it could never happen in Tunisia’). It was not a chance taken within a revolutionary situation, but rather a militant

movement imposed upon a reality that believed itself to be impenetrable (–Tunisia over the last couple days has been described by media as having been both ‘the most modern African state’ and consequently, ‘a totalitarian police state’). This moment of insurrection is not static and can swing in any direction or reaction; the nation–state of Tunisia and the histories of those breaking free from it, outline such potentialities.

carthage is burning!

The product of an ancient lineage of foreign occupation, Tunisia was first colonized by the Roman Empire in 146 BC. The Arab invasion in the 7th century lasted until 1882 when the Europeans fought it out amongst themselves for control which finally ended in French domination. In 1942 the Nazis took over until finally ousted by a popular nationalist movement that was subsequently able to kick out the French in a campaign of armed struggle between the years of 1952–55. This ushered in the on–going reign of neocolonialism. The party that controlled Tunisian society and imprisoned the indigenous populations within its borders has undergone a number of name changes and even flirted with ideological deviations including mass collectivization of land and nationalization of industry, as well as support for Palestinian resistance. The socialist facade dissolved in the toxic dumping of liberalism in the 70’s – which in turn unleashed waves of mass revolt that left dozens dead in the rioting which mirrors the images being transmitted from Tunisia today. In reaction to the popular unrest a new prime minister was imposed in 1980 and implemented the apparatus of fascistic control that is now being torn asunder. In a decade–long exchange of blows between the state and society – in which the state resorted to the mass imprisonment and killings – Ben Ali (last seen running for his life) was crowned under the latest party handle: the Democratic Constitution Rally. He went on to solidify his position by further negating hard fought rights and banning most oppositional parties. It is this process that returns the rupture of revolt.

While ultras’ Power–Knowledge helped substantially in articulating and holding the front line, the front line was made of many other youths who carried on the fight. Some were young Islamists, refusing to obey their official party line. But the majority of front line fighters came from the substantial population of young, socially excluded men from Cairo’s peripheral ‘ashwa’i [“informal”] neighborhoods. They are sometimes called the wilad sis.

The wilad sis are young working class men who might be described as precarious workers, most are unemployed, underemployed, unskilled and semi–skilled, doing occasional jobs that change every day (though on most days, there is no “work”). Others refuse work and subsist upon the black market. They are often marked by a particular dress code and hairstyle that often involves copious quantities of gel (the word sis alludes to the attention they often pay to their appearance).

Earlier this year I traveled through Tunisia, Cairo and in Alexandria I met, over much hash, with a group of young insurgents who identified themselves as ‘Franco Arabia’s’. They celebrated a pan– Mediterranean, as expressed in a unique style of hip–hop and aggressive migration to Italy, a proclivity towards anarchism, queer liberation and are combatively against patriarchy

Proudly they told me it was their call for a day of action against the police– who had killed one of their comrades, which helped instigate the insurrection. The day of action was organized for Jan 25th– the national day of police, and after its announcement on face book, Tunisia exploded and the antagonisms in Alexandria and across Egypt did as well, until finally on that day, the demonstration led millions onto the streets which they violently held for weeks.

From the various field reports that I salvaged these quotes from, there is recognition of the middle class activists (as well as Islamist youths), most who expressed the understanding that without the barricades and violent resistance they would not have been able to protest. But no interviews for this montage. I will though, share this

Says an El Ahly ultra: “You don’t change things in Egypt talking about politics. We’re not political, the government knows that and has to deal with us,”

Rabab El-Mahdi calls this “clear class confrontations”. “Since the Ultras were created, they were always targeted by state security. They are seen as a mob or as hooligans,” she continues, “So they developed skills that none of the middle class was forced to develop. Plus they come from backgrounds where such skills are needed on daily basis just as survival mechanisms.”

She added that as long as Egypt’s security apparatus remained intact, violent confrontations would continue. “The skills they developed in dealing with police came in very handy and it comes in handy every time there is a direct confrontation,”

The ultras’ experience is also reflected in the setting up of survival services for the mass of protesters camped on the square in tents behind barricades and the introduction of a rotation of labour among them.

“There were designated rock hurlers, specialists in turning over and torching vehicles for defensive purposes and a machine like quartermaster crew delivering projectiles like clockwork on a cardboard platters.”

Ultras member Ahmed is careful to explain that he and his “brothers in blood” do not attack first. “An Ultra doesn’t attack anyone, We’re a watchdog for the truth. Any unfairness that we spot, within the state or anywhere, we have to stand up for what is right.”

“We don’t have any political direction. Whenever we go to a strike or a demonstration, we do it on an individual basis. We don’t announce it. We are just here as humans. On Saturday, initially we came individually. But then we found because we have similar beliefs we went straight to the front line and there were our brothers to the left and right. The personality of an Ultra places you at the front line because you are defending a cause. There is nothing easy in life, we have to suffer and sacrifice until we achieve.”

social war against empire

The multitude that now holds the popular position is not unfamiliar with the reoccurrence of domination under the various guises of counter-revolution. The success of the revolt thus far has been its assemblage of tactics and strategy which deterritorialize the urbanism into smooth space. This in turn ensures the movement’s agility in the streets, its velocity in concentration of power and dispersal of forces, its unity of mass and transmogrification of attack. Conducted dually with the mobilizations of popular power has been the rearguard battles fought out with rocks, burning barricades and armed struggle. Without the communal-militarization of the social unrest, the state’s military and police forces would have succeeded in putting down the upheaval as they had before on several occasions. And that crux is now the major theatre of operations – currently being conducted within the state of emergency: the armed communization of the multitude, who behind their barricades are defending their territory from the forces of command– the police, army, politicians and death squads who are at the behest of empire, in the dire attempt to ‘regain order’.

Further underlining the mode of the multitude is the reality of the total social upheaval. That society has been subsumed by capital throughout empire is met in consequence by the configurations of the multitudes revolt. A social war not isolated to any one contradiction; where all antagonisms are played out over the entire social terrain– not confined to the workplace or parliaments, and thereby unable to be institutionally mediated in isolation. The social war that is revolutionizing society in Tunisia has its equal force throughout the planetary upheavals now rupturing empire in a global civil war. In the bordering nation-state of Algeria the rocks are hurled and barricades built with the might and subjectivity of the same multitude, which disperse along the similar lines of flight that are transversed through that region by the millions of nomadic people who have for millennia

been at war.

nomad war machine

Within the fortress state of Tunisia, convoys of 'Imazighen' (free people) make their way through the southern lands. The Bedouin and Berbers and nomadic and have violently fought off state appropriation. 'The war machine is that nomadic invention that in fact has war not as its primary object but as its second-order, supplementary or synthetic objective, in the sense that it is determined in such a way as to destroy the State-form and city-form with which it collides.' As many nomads have been economically forced to migrate to the cities as wage-slaves, we can assume that the tendencies of the nomadic war machine have been re-communized there – the necessity to flee from the state, but while doing so, grabbing a weapon.

exodus

It is in this exodus from the state apparatus that the Tunisian multitude-in-motion must continue. The popular power in the streets has left power in the gutter, can it be gathered and used to smash the state, or will it be re-conquered by empire now circling overhead? At the height of unrest the prisoners in many prisons across Tunisia knew how it must be done, they did not wait for the political outcome, but forced their way through the concrete walls of reality. In one case a fire set during the prison revolt led to the mournful killing of many insurgents shot whilst fleeing the flames; in other prisons they escaped by forcefully taking control. Without being able to rely upon the forces of command, now bunked down in the street fighting – the prison guards were in no position to defend the institution and the prisoners walked out. It is our hope that they are able to return to destroy the prisons once and for all. It is our desire to do the same here.

hymns," protester Mosa'ab Elshamy wrote on Twitter on the first day of last weeks clashes. It is part of the Ultras code to remain anonymous to non-members. Dressed in a uniform of skinny jeans, neck scarves and hooded sweatshirts pulled tight over their heads, the Ultras in Tahrir could go unnoticed.

They are here now. Stepping out from the blaze of their flares. Constitutive of the ongoing occupation, their camp is set apart by hastily sketched graffiti on the tents that proclaims their beliefs for those who know the code.

"A-C-A-B," Ahmed said, reading aloud the red etchings on the outside of his tent. "All cops are bastards," he explained. According to Ahmed, the abbreviation is a motto for Ultras clubs around the world. Ultra clubs, and the rest of us.

According to the blog, The Turbulent World of Middle East Soccer:

"Established in 2007, the ultras – modeled on Italy's autonomous, often violent fan clubs – have since proven their metal in past confrontations with the Egyptian police, who charge that criminals and terrorists populate their ranks.

The ultras key role in the rebellion extends a tradition of soccer's close association with politics in Egypt dating back to when the then British colonial power introduced the game to the North African country in the early 20th century. "

Out of the scene and into the streets! "Before the revolution the Ultras were confined to stadiums, so people didn't know much about them," occupier Elshamy said.

"After the revolution a lot of perspectives changed about them and they became really popular. They were described as those courageous guys. They stayed there in the square almost through 100 hours of fighting; It's easy to notice them because of their use of Molotov cocktails, their extreme courage and recklessness, their chants. They became a common sight."

“A beautiful storm has come, but not yet the beautiful destruction”. The cyclone of intifada continues to destroy the Egyptian state, “I am boycotting because I believe it is a circus,” said rebel-blogger Hossam el-Hamalawy, “You cannot have clean elections while the police force which has not been purged is in charge of securing the ballot boxes. You have to settle the battle in the streets, then you settle it in the ballot boxes. We have to win our occupation in Tahrir Square first.”

The street opens itself to the community-in-motion as a parallel space against the state from which the emergent counter-power reproduces new ways of thinking and acting.

The battle of Tahrir is diffused throughout society this last year. Escaping reification into the political apparatus of capture, it exists as a Popular Power in the Streets. Over the last week it has manifest as violent insurrection in the district surrounding Tahrir Square, the Muhammad Mahoud meidan, where I stayed months ago:

“The people in Muhammad Mahmoud are decidedly not revolutionaries, they are vandals,” a police captain insisted. When in Rome, do as the Vandals.

From the revolution to civil war- no longer revolutionaries but a new form of life escaping from the structures of civilization. “It’s a way of life. You don’t just become one. You aren’t converted. You have to be an Ultra from within,” said Ahmed, a Cairo native and Ultra member who only agreed to an interview if his real name and appearance were not revealed. The Ultras are “anti-media,” according to Ahmed. He said they prefer to keep their identities secret.

‘Ultra’. Who the fuck are these guys. “The Ultras have stood at the forefront of recent clashes with security forces. In many cases, they were armed with rocks, petrol bombs and firecrackers.” A fraternal organization of mad bombers.

“The Ultras are here. I know that because they’re the only ones facing the CSF (police) with force while singing their

chronology of intifada in tunisia & egypt

against chronos, for chaos: First, a warning on the political usage of chronology. The attempt to codify these mass ruptures into the historical framework of chronology allows the events and situations to be captured by the History of Civilization. This in turn will phantasmagorically dissolve these moments of insurrection into the conspiracies of a invisible dictatorship or a revolutionary vanguard, while simultaneously imposing a regime of reification upon the singular acts of subjective revolt. Being conscious of this, and so many other reasons not to summaries such a massive and indescribable phenomenon as a general insurrection- I have decided to do so in order to contest the pacifist rendition of events, which isolate certain actions and negated others. This chronology is simply a montage of numerous incidents reported by various news agencies, in compiling them together I hope only to derive a little more understanding then intended by their original reproduction.

tunisia intifada

december 17:

-Mohammed Bouazizi, a 26-year-old man trying to support his family by selling fruits and vegetables in the central town of Sidi Bouzid, douses himself in paint thinner and sets himself on fire in front of a local municipal office.

Police had confiscated his produce cart because he lacked a permit and beat him when he resisted. Local officials then refused to hear his complaint. He is taken to a hospital near Tunis for treatment of his third-degree burns.

The news spreads like a prairie fire; the social ruptures begin in Sidi Bouzid, they quickly spread across the region, then the country.

december 20:

-The Tunisian development minister, travels to Sidi Bouzid to announce a new \$10 million employment program. Protests continue unabated.

december 24:

-Hundreds rally in front of the Tunisian labor union headquarters over rampant unemployment; as well as clashing with Tunisian security forces in the central towns of al-Ragab and Miknassi. Skirmishes break out when security forces stage overnight crackdown campaigns.

december 25:

-Demonstrations and street battles spread to Kairouan, Sfax and Ben Guerdane. An interior ministry spokesperson says police were forced to 'shoot in self-defense' after warning shots failed to disperse scores of insurgents who were setting police cars and buildings ablaze.

december 27:

-Police and demonstrators fight as one thousand hold a rally, calling for jobs in a show of solidarity with those protesting in poorer regions. Demonstrations also break out in Sousse.

december 28:

-The Tunisian Federation of Labor Unions holds another rally in Gafsa province, which is suppressed by security forces. At the same time, about 300 lawyers demonstrate near the government's palace in Tunis in solidarity with protesters. Lawyers march in several other cities as well.

cyclones of struggle from occupation to intifada



december 29:

-Security forces attack a demonstration in the northeastern city of Monastir and the town of Sbikha. There are also reports of violence in the town of Chebba.

december 31:

-Lawyers across Tunisia respond to a call to assemble in protest over the arrested lawyers and in solidarity with the people of Sidi Bouzid. Authorities react to the protests with force, and lawyers were 'savagely beaten'.

january 2:

-The hacktivist group "Anonymous" announces 'Operation Tunisia' in solidarity with the protests by striking a number of government websites with "direct denial of service" attacks, flooding them with traffic and temporarily shutting them down. Several online activists report on Twitter that their email and Facebook accounts were hacked.

january 3:

-About 250 demonstrators, mostly students, revolt in the city of Thala. The protest turns riot after police try to stop it by firing tear gas canisters. In response, protesters set fire to tires and attack the local offices of the ruling party.

january 5:

-Mohamed Bouazizi, who launched the uprising by setting himself on fire two and a half weeks earlier dies. A massive funeral is later held for him in Sidi Bouzid, his hometown.

january 6:

-Tunisia's 8,000 lawyers launch a strike demanding an end to police brutality against protesters.

january 7:

-Police arrest a group of bloggers, journalists, activists and a hip hop artist in a crackdown on dissent. Some of them reportedly go missing.

january 8:

-At least six protesters are reportedly killed and six others wounded in clashes with police in Tala, a provincial town near the border with Algeria. Another three people were killed in similar clashes in the Kasserine region.

-In Tala, police fired their weapons after using water cannons to try to disperse the multitude, which had set fire to a government building. The crowd has also thrown stones and

petrol bombs at police.

january 12:

-Tear gas and stone-throwing youths, many of them street vendors, reached the heart of Tunisia's once-calm capital. The riot has turned insurrection.

january 13:

-Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Tunisia's president, makes a televised address, announcing unprecedented concessions and vowing not to seek re-election in 2014. He pledges to introduce more freedoms into society, institutional reforms, and investigate the killings of protesters during demonstrations. Formerly blocked or banned websites reportedly become accessible. The country continues to burn.

january 14:

-Ben Ali declares a state of emergency and fires the government.

-State media reports that gatherings of more than three people have been banned and "arms will be used if orders of security forces are not heeded."

-That night, as the revolt escalates the president and his family flee for their lives.

-Mohammed Ghannouchi, the prime minister, appears on state television to announce that he is assuming the role of interim president.

january 15:

-Insurgents emptied shops and torched the main train station in Tunis, soldiers traded fire with assailants in front of the Interior Ministry, and thousands of European tourists flee in white-flight.

-Insurgents ransack expensive manors belonging to the old regime, and torch banks run by the family of Ben Ali, as well as burning vehicles made by Kia, Fiat and Porsche – carmakers distributed in Tunisia by members of the ruling family.

-Residents in several parts of Tunis form community militias, whilst groups of provocateurs were prowling through neighborhoods at night setting fire to buildings and attacking people and homes, with no police in sight.

- A fire set during a prison uprising in Monastir in eastern Tunisia killed at least 42 inmates.

- In Mahdia, further down the coast, inmates set fire to their mattresses in protest. Soldiers opened fire, killing five inmates.

But of course the power of counter-revolution is parasitic – it finds its dwellings in needs and fears. It invokes the threat of civil war, it points to Libya and promises the same – only votes, they hiss, can lead to calm and prosperity. Many will pour their hopes into the elections, which they know was won with their blood. But the system will not be able to return the investment. For to make such concessions that are being demanded would bankrupt the bourgeoisie as a class. But the bourgeoisie will find that the poor who delivered them to power are not genies who can be returned to their lanterns. Their expectations are gut wrenching. The class war is so massive that single members of the bourgeoisie will have to sacrifice their gains to a military dictatorship, or betray their loyalties and return home to the multitude. It is in this real state of emergency that new subjectivities are created, becoming whatever they desire and choosing to live free. Such is the emergent potentiality of the blooming intifada.

families form an assembly of sorting. Finally, garbage is pulped and turned into anything you can think of. Hundreds of gardens grow aplenty. Day cares and health clinics, schools and care homes all constructed by collective effort. If the intifada cannot defend garbage city by eliminating islamo-facism – conditions will quickly spiral into more massacres. And if the global intifada cannot reproduce the relationships that are lived here into an emergent universalism – it will all be in vain; for the encroaching collapse will usher in no future but planetary omnicide.

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The state of emergency, which for oppressed people is the norm, has been by force, by a beautiful storm – inverted, flipped inside out – so that those who once lived besieged by command, now lay siege to it. This real state of emergency where the balance of power shifts so exceptionally so as to create in its wake a whole new assemblage of relations is where counter power begins to generalize itself into a new norm of the common. Perhaps nothing better marked this state of reversal then the popular stormings of the state secret security institutions, first in Alexandria – then Cairo, then throughout Egypt, until each was overrun, looted, confiscated, destroyed – how easily the most precious appendages of the state apparatus fall to the power of the street in the times of real emergency.

Once declared by the multitude, the real emergency – smashes the monopoly of violence held by the state and all actions of retribution are permissible. Not solely acts to avenge our histories – but also acts that redeem our futures by expanding counter power deeper into the affairs of people. Old dependancies which unified survival to the state are severed and wither, and under the real emergency new cooperations take their place: citizen fire brigades, neighborhood defense committees, people getting out of their car to direct traffic. The system of bribery and nepotism that makes all states into mafias, is thrown into the dustbin.

The revolting prisoners then overwhelmed the guards, took control of the prison and opened the gates for the liberation of 1000 internees.

-In front of the Interior Ministry in Tunis, security forces and unidentified assailants had a shootout.

january 16:

-A group of Swedes on a hunting trip in Tunisia were attacked.

january 17:

-An interim government is announced, but includes several Ben Ali loyalists in key posts – including the defense, interior and foreign ministers – and few opposition members in lesser positions.

january 18:

-Rejecting the lineup of the new government, the multitude takes back the streets in revolt.

january 21:

-The first of three days of mourning sees protesters gather peacefully throughout the day in Tunis. They demand the dissolution of the new government as they honor those who died in the insurrection.

january 22:

-Thousands of protesters take to the streets continuing to demand the removal of all RCD members from the interim government.

-Rebels break through barricades at the prime minister's office.

january 23:

-As the third and final day of national mourning begins, protesters hold the streets, after former RCD government ministers showed no signs of resigning.

-Hundreds of Tunisians defy a nighttime curfew and travel hundreds of kilometers in what they call a 'Liberation caravan' to join protesters in the capital, where anger at the interim government continues to grow along side the call for permanent revolution.

january 24:

-In two days of street fighting in the capital, hundreds of rebels clashed with riot police in front of government buildings.

january 26:

-Clashes break out near government offices in the old city, or Kasbah, where riot police fire teargas at hundreds of

demonstrators.

-The Tunisian General Labor Union holds a general strike in Sfax, Tunisia's second city and economic centre.

february 2:

-Youths armed with knives and sticks marauded through the streets of Gassrine, burning government buildings.

february 6:

-After a police chief slapped a woman during a demonstration in the town of Kef, a mob of nearly a thousand then attacked the station.

february 10:

-The police station in Sidi Thabet, in the Ariana (northern suburb of Tunis) governorate is attacked "for no reason", reported an Interior Ministry statement, "by a group of about a hundred people". The attackers injured a policeman, destroyed documents and damaged the building, as well as setting fire to a cops car. Intervention by an army unit caused the attackers to make their escape, though two were arrested. The police station had previously been attacked and set fire to in the first few days of the popular revolt.

february 16:

-Thirty-five inmates of a Tunisian prison in Gabes escaped after assaulting their guards and making a hole in the wall.

february 25:

-Refusing all political manipulations, demonstrators chanted "Ghannouchi leave" and "Shame on this government" as army helicopters circled above the crowd massed in the Kasbah government quarter, where police estimated that the number of people topped 100,000. Protesters shouted "Revolution until victory" and "We will root out repression in our land". Insurgents burned tires and threw rocks through the windows of the interior ministry building.

-In Kasserine, rebels set public buildings on fire.

february 26:

-Amidst hurled stones, Interim president steps down

march 5:

-In Kasserine, young rioters hit the central police station and the National Guard first, and moved on to the government finance office and public offices burning all files. Schools, banks and small businesses were looted. An attempt to bust friends out of prison was suppressed by the military, as was the sabotage of a factory.

he was in turn killed by his relatives. As this 'feud' continued, a group of Muslims broke off and attacked a Christian church, destroying it with hammers in front of the community. Following this - members of the community went to Cairo to protest the complicity of the police and military. At this time provocateurs spread the lie that Christians had burnt down the mosque and attacked Muslim women. This incited the massacre and targeted raping of the Christians of Garbage City.

There have been nightly attacks since. I'm shown bullet holes in homes and the sabotage of the water drains. I am introduced to men who were shot and young woman who were raped. Scores of people surround me with events being translated incompressibility. They believe I'm with somebody that will help them. The mother apologies to me when I have to suppress weeping while hearing the story of her raped daughter who has returned with a soda for me to drink.

Many Zabbaleen (literally, garbage collectors) went to Tahrir Square in revolt. I ask if they have faith in the revolution to bring justice. Each I ask, shrug and say it's in the hands of god.

Barbarous religious warfare is escalating as cults like the Muslim Brotherhood appropriate space made by the intifada. There is no doubt, and in fact proven in many cases, that the military continues in operations that further entrench intolerance and violence. The Zabbaleen have long been subjected to discrimination and persecution. As refugees from the south they were abandoned to the city dump over a hundred years ago. They were able create an economy based on mutual aid and cooperation. This lasted in prosperity until recently when the state ordered the extermination of their pigs (used to eat compostable garbage) and then privatized garbage collecting, ending what has been unanimously declared as the world's most efficient recycling system.

But still they persist. Showing up in fleets of trucks and donkey carts to steal the garbage before the corporate collectors show up. Back in their City, thousands of

courthouses, ticket office – are all fired. Three million people took power into the streets; they construct mass encampments and create food and supply lines for this people's army. The politicians parachute in and attempt to claim the intifada as their own. Most especially – the Muslim Brotherhood is despised by many for being collaborators with the regime. On site, the FrancoArabas agitate against their xenophobia, 'We are all Muslim, Christian, Jew, gays – we are the people and the people make the revolution.' The police are forced off the street and the army reluctantly sides with the popular counter power.

The police have only just started seeping back in, in small numbers doing symbolic tasks – one such cop who killed, was himself beaten to death, stripped naked and left in the street. 'they are scared now, before they beat us, now we kick over their motorcycles!' none of the FrancoArabas voted; 'we will wait and see.' 'We fought to change the system, not the government.' Shit, I heard so much more then this, but the hash has done me in, and now it's the moon I cant take my eyes off.

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On the outstretches of Cairo are two shatter zones which are refuge to many who have fled oppression in the south. Beside the City of the Living and the Dead – named so because in and amongst the tombs live twenty thousand families; is Garbage City – called so because one hundred thousand live in and amongst mountains of garbage, sorting, recycling and reusing. Garbage City symbolizes two ways this collapse of civilization is gonna go: easily put – Fascism or Egalitarianism.

A few weeks ago there was a massacre here. The repressive relationship between factions of Muslims and Christians exploded and led to the killings of many, shot in the heads and in the hearts, and the injuring of hundreds. The single event in a long history of blood vengeance was explained to me by a local. A love affair between a Christian man and a Muslim women led the Muslim father to beat his daughter almost to death. Having not killed her,

egypt intifada

january 25:

-On a national holiday to commemorate the police forces, a multitude of Egyptians take to the streets in large numbers, calling it a "day of rage".

-Thousands march in downtown Cairo, heading towards the offices of the ruling National Democratic Party, as well as the foreign ministry and the state television. Similar protests are reported in other towns across the country. In Suez the ruling NDP headquarters is set on fire.

january 26:

-A protester and a police officer are killed in central Cairo as anti-government demonstrators pelt security forces with rocks and firebombs for a second day.

-Police use tear gas, water cannons and batons to disperse rioters in Cairo; live ammunition is also fired into the air.

-In Suez, the scene of bloody clashes the previous day, police and protesters clash again.

-Dozens of armed Bedouins surrounded a police station in central Sinai, locking in 15 police officers and setting a car ablaze.

january 27:

-Protests continue across several cities. Hundreds have been arrested, but the protesters say they will not give up. Facebook, Twitter and Blackberry Messenger services being disrupted by the State.

-Protesters clash with police in Cairo neighborhoods. Violence also erupts in the city of Suez again, while in the northern Sinai area of Sheikh Zuweid, several hundred Bedouins and police exchange gunfire.

-In Ismailia, hundreds of protesters engage in street fighting with police.

january 28:

-Country prepares for a new wave of protests after Friday prayers.

-An elite special counter-terrorism force has been deployed at strategic points around Cairo in the hours before the planned protests. Egypt's interior ministry also warns of "decisive measures".

-Police and protesters clash throughout the country. Eleven

civilians are killed in Suez and 170 injured. No deaths are reported in Cairo. At least 1,030 people get injured countrywide.

-Troops are ordered onto the streets in Cairo, Suez and Alexandria, but do not interfere in the confrontations between police and protesters.

-The riots continue throughout the night, even as Mubarak announces that he dismisses his government.

-Thousands of Egyptian insurgents stormed the main police station in the port city of Suez, overwhelming security authorities. The people freed prisoners from the city jail, destroyed armored police vehicles then sacked the building and looted its contents.

january 29:

-Egyptian soldiers secure Cairo's famed antiquities museum, protecting thousands of priceless artifacts, but not before rioters and looters smash and pillage.

-The greatest threat to the Egyptian Museum, which draws millions of tourists a year, comes from the fire engulfing the ruling party headquarters next door, set ablaze by insurgents.

-Thousands of anti-government protesters in Cairo's Tahrir (liberation) Square stand their ground, despite troops firing into the air in a bid to disperse them.

-Mubarak appoints a vice-president for the first time during his three decades in power. The man now second-in-command is Omar Suleiman, the country's former spy chief, who has been working closely with Mubarak during most of his reign. The revolutionaries reject this move.

-Rebels burn down Ismailia's State Security Police headquarters, one of the main torture centers in the town.

- A group of Bedouin attack state security headquarters in the town of Rafah near Egypt's border with Israel, killing three policemen.

-Egyptian police shot dead 17 people trying to attack two police stations in Beni Suef governorate, south of Cairo.

january 30:

-Thousands of protesters remain in Cairo's Tahrir Square.

-Some 17,000 Egyptian detainees exodus from prisons during the recent unrest, some escaping because prison guards had abandoned their posts and police vanished from the streets of Cairo and other cities. In a special prison for Palestinian POW's, the walls are demolished and liberated prisoners returned to

face of the planet.

I accidentally stumble into an art show that is being put on for dignitaries of the European Union. Circling the cesspool of artists and grotesque politicians are highly stylized photos of the Tehrin Intifada. The scum suck down their kabobs and guzzle their booze. It's hard to imagine much worse. I escape hoping the place will burn. Art is the mechanism that normalizes antagonisms into a commodity form. It captures the potential of a revolutionary culture and places it within the regulations of the bourgeoisie. Scrambling away down the nearest alley, I'm stopped for a light. Relieved, I have a smoke with a guy and I quickly ask him about the uprising. His brother was killed. It took twenty-two days to find his body; in a morgue, mutilated and robbed. He now looks after his brother's two children. He takes out his wallet and shows me their picture.

Holy fuck, I'm stoned. There is a full moon over the harbor of Alexandria and I'm awash in hash. Smoked in a café, which was the only free-ish spot before the intifada. I couldn't take my eyes of those seated around the table. They all refer to themselves as 'FrancoArabas' - a term proudly invented for the young and rebellious bastard children of the metropolis. I didn't have my tape recorder, so I retain only chunks.

The Egyptian revolution will forever be known to have been January 25th. But here, it was the 24th. On the day meant to celebrate the police. A month previous, a pig killed a student and so a protest was marked for the 24th, I'm told there was a Facebook page. In the lead up to that day, there were many scuffles with the police who were increasing nervous watching the fate of their colleagues in Tunisia. Finally comes the 24th and all hell breaks lose. Hand-to-hand combat quickly escalates into armed confrontation. 'We fire all the police stations' (save one) and over the next three days the government buildings,

people no longer want to exist as commodities and whose revolt explodes capitalist logic, a referendum for interim government is seen for the shadow play it is; and those who avert their gaze from such spectacle say, we don't want 'power', we want the power to change all of life.

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'A time between ashes and roses is coming; when everything shall be extinguished, when everything will begin again.' Throughout the rupture the Egyptian museum was attacked several times. Not only did looters expropriate some priceless junk, but the insurgents – in beautiful acts of primitive-revolt – smashed several of the artifacts that celebrated the decadence of domination. Such primal iconoclasm signifies much more than rage, it is a conscious attack against civilization.

Such actions are the cry for exodus, to abandon the site of slavery and exit the domain of control. By neither remaining subservient – nor engaging power upon its terrain, exodus explodes the either/or. Exodus fights a rearguard battle against the pursuing forces of the pharaoh, whilst moving away deeper into the desert – from which the coming community is founded. Exodus – in its primitive-revolt blasts apart the continuum of history and transfixes the moment of insurrection into an eternal present. By smashing the wreckage of civilization, which piles up around us to the sky, a line of flight is drawn and war machines placed upon it. The sarcophagus of state is demolished – the mummy elite dragged out into the light of a new dawn, and turn into dust. The hieroglyphs of the institutions, which guard command, in their spectacular complexities – turn a dead language, as new communications come into being. For this is exodus from totality.

The attack on the museum is inspired so. It tells us, 'old gods die hard, but smash easy!' These signifiers of civilization are its scaffold, and as such need only to be pulled down to cave it all in. What is of value is looted and the rest abandoned. This is how the multitude, like a scarab beetle, will push the dunghill of civilization off the

Gaza in a convoy of buses.

january 31:

-Mubarak still refuses to step down, amid growing calls for his resignation. Protesters continue to defy the military-imposed curfew. About 250,000 people gather in Cairo's Tahrir Square and thousands march through Alexandria.

-Internet access across Egypt is still sabotaged by the state.

-Opposition groups continue to call for a "million man march" and a general strike on Tuesday to commemorate one week since the protests began. Meanwhile, the military reiterates that it will not attempt to hurt protesters.

-Worldwide investors continue withdrawing significant capital from Egypt amid rising unrest.

february 1:

-Number of people in Cairo's Tahrir Square is more than a million. Thousands more take to the streets throughout Egypt, including in Alexandria and Suez.

february 2:

-Violent clashes rage for much of the day around Tahrir Square in central Cairo. Up to 1,500 people are injured, some of them seriously, as the military allow thousands of pro-Mubarak reactionaries, armed with sticks and knives.

february 3:

-Bursts of heavy gunfire aimed at anti-government demonstrators in Tahrir Square, leave at least five people dead and several more wounded.

-The counter-insurgents charge threw the square on horses and camel back; several are torn down from their saddles and engulfed by the mob.

february 4:

-Hundreds of thousands of anti-government protesters gather in Cairo's Tahrir Square for what they have termed the "Day of Departure".

february 5:

-Thousands who remain inside Tahrir Square fear an approaching attempt by the military to evacuate the square.

-Unknown saboteurs attacked an Egyptian pipeline supplying gas to Jordan, forcing authorities to switch off gas supply from a twin pipeline to Israel.

february 7:

-Thousands are camping out in Tahrir Square, refusing to budge as Egypt's government approve a 15 per cent raise in salaries and pensions in a bid to appease.

-Militants attacked a camp belonging to Egyptian security forces in the town of Rafah.

february 8:

-Protesters continue to gather at Tahrir Square, which now resembles a commune. Protesters in the capital also gather to protest outside parliament.

february 9:

-Labor unions, controlled by the state, join protesters in the street, with some of them calling for revolution, others for Mubarak to step down, while others simply call for better pay. Massive strikes start rolling throughout the country.

- Several protesters suffered gunshot wounds and one was killed when 3,000 protesters took to the streets in Wadi al-Jadid, where clashes from the previous nights carried over to the early hours.

february 10:

-Amid rumors that he will be stepping down tonight, Mubarak gives a televised speech, which he says is "from the heart". He repeats his promise to not run in the next presidential elections and to "continue to shoulder" his responsibilities in the "peaceful transition" that he says will take place in September.

-Protesters in Tahrir Square react with fury when Mubarak says he's remaining in power until September. Protesters wave their shoes in the air, and demand the army join them in revolt.

february 11:

-Unidentified assailants attacked security force barracks in the Egyptian border town of Rafah, near the border with the Gaza Strip, following president Hosni Mubarak's speech. The attackers opened fire with guns and used rocket-propelled grenades.

-After an unprecedented number take to the streets across Egypt, the president resigns and hands power over to military.

-Earlier in the day, masses of protesters had descended on the state television building in Cairo and the presidential palace in Heliopolis, as well as in Tahrir Square.

-About 1,000 protesters attacked the police station in El-Arish in an attempt to free political prisoners held by the regime.

I'm told that the trees on the corners are painted to signify that 'there is no government here'. No cops either, thought the military drives through today with their jeeps decked out in 'Vote Yes' propaganda. The trees are painted red, white and black – the Egyptian colors; this is not nationalistic but a sign of national consciousness. The fundamental difference is clear in the internationalist spirit which is manifest in Libyan rebel and Palestinian flags, which adorn many cafes. In the last few weeks there have been rallies in support of the Brahnan insurgents and against American imperialism and Zionist occupation. These secessionist communities are celebrating a renaissance of their unique peculiarities while in solidarity with the world. A constellation of Tahrir squares re-communized in a galaxy of communities.

These neighborhoods are no longer fixed in their historical inertias and cultural delineates, but have become communities-in-movement. In their secession from the state they have a disposition towards the common, the dynamics of which are autonomy and cooperation. This social machine is war on the state-form: dispersion of power, plus social cooperation. The community brigades who continue in shifts to patrol their areas have no hierarchal structure, thus dispersing centralization and feeding cooperation. That the plural 'hoods, outlined by residential alleys come into contact and share in the building – or re-communizing, of the common, as nodes – not partitioned zones, maximizes the singular strength of multiple communities-in-movement.

Everywhere are 'NO' signs, but it is not made clear to me who made them. Many newly formed parties are against the referendum as they seek more time to develop their own bureaucratic structures. But, all but a few of those I had the pleasure to give a smoke and speak with are not voting at all. 'Why vote, there will only be another revolution', she tells me. In the revolution of everyday life, everyday is exceptional to rule. Wither totalitarian or democratic, it is the unifying function of the state, which these communities must escape. When the commodified

asleep. The aura of authority – that which is closest to heavens – is vanquished.

Only now with the imperial financing for the reconstruction of the institutions, is the state able to survive on life support. If these flows which allow the conspiracy of democracy were to be sabotaged by global direct action – and smashed states left to fend for themselves – their withering would be immediate. In our failure of such duty, empire, through international intervention, takes on an imminence in society, the more so in revolutions fought for the sake of state. In so far that such a society is power, biopower and spectacle are the sublimation of power. Not so long ago Egypt transplanted concentrated spectacle with a diffuse spectaclarisation of society, the old ways took on new methods – integrating power through a mediation of law and institutions. Now, empire will attempt to generalize itself throughout society by norms and apparatuses. The difference is seen in operations. Whereas institutions regulate a pan-optical society – norms cut through lives and organize them as forms-of-life. In the absence of dominant apparatuses, the destruction of institutions sufficed in the smashing of state. The life forms created in this rupture are now the responsibility of empire to suppress, and the counter-insurgency operation of choice is the spectacle of parliamentary democracy.

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I spend the day cabbing to a few neighborhoods of Cairo – seeking insight into the functioning of the referendum. It's clear that all districts are severed from the centre, from which emanates the phylaxian of a lame military occupation – for it is there that sit the many upturned thrones of power. Choosing an area in the north, east, west and south, I spend only an hour or two in each – filling my bladder with tea and speaking with who will talk to me. There is resentment directed against me by many who are disgusted with the journalist vultures that circle the city. I comfort myself knowing I write for no boss. But still...

february 12:

-People celebrate and dance all night and day and night in Tahrir Square.

february 13:

-Soldiers try to remove the remaining protesters in Tahrir Square who refuse to surrender to the new military regime, and their tents are forcefully dismantled. Traffic flows through the square for the first time since the insurrection began.

-Some public sector workers and bank employees are also protesting in Alexandria and other cities.

february 14:

-Most communards leave Tahrir Square in the morning, but a few thousands return later- most of them protesting against the police.

-Ambulance drivers and other workers are holding separate demonstrations.

-Roving strikes escalate and the military leadership issues “Communiqué No 5”, calling for national solidarity and criticizing strike action.

february 26:

-The Egyptian army has used force to disperse activists gathered in Cairo's Tahrir Square to demand the removal of Hosni Mubarak loyalists from the interim cabinet. Demonstrators had also gathered in front of the parliament building in Cairo, where police beat protesters and used tasers to suppress the crowds.

march 4:

-Several hundred protesters marched on to the state security headquarters in Alexandria. The mob had surrounded the building calling on the government to dismantle and abolish the state security service apparatus, one of the country's most notorious security agencies. State security forces had opened fire at one point to push the crowds away. Minutes later, protesters managed to break into the state security building taking control of the ground floor.

march 6:

-2500 insurgents return to state security buildings and storm the compound, overwhelming the military and poured into several buildings. The buildings were ransacked in the search for detainees and specific documents that outline the apparatus on-going counter-insurgency.

sun digs its nails deeper into my skull.

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Today's referendum, which has been adorned by a public holiday, is a counter-insurgency attempt at territorializing the enmity directed at the state into codified forms of political representation – a representation reproduced to accommodate a risen state of political consciousness into a free range pasture. That the Canadian state is helping finance this 'democracy building' is no surprise. Empire scrambles to institutionalize the crisis growing in the wake of this escalating Global Civil War. New allegiances are formed to solidify ranks. Democracy is the name given to this war alliance.

The deterritorialisation of Tahrir Square is of utmost importance. The militant degree of communization that took place there near devoured the whole state apparatus. Not only in the blocks and attacks against capital and command, but in the existence and reproduction of autonomous life thriving in an expanding commune defined by its mutual aid. Across the country other such realities were created and began connecting with one another – not uniting in one body, but as localized reinforcements which had the military drawn and quartered across such vast regions. In the south, nomadic warriors destroyed the chain of military outposts and seized all the arms; it is inconceivable to believe they would trade them in for the freedom to vote – in a warlord for the northern metropolis. The industrial cities are still rocked by roving wildcat strikes that will not cease regardless of the outcome of the referendum. The liberated prisoners will not return to their demolished cells, and the police will never again be safe.

The partisan subjectivity of this intifada cannot be captured by the parliamentary apparatus – the rupture is too massive, the multitude ungovernable. The authority of state is burnt to the ground. In front the government building – a totally devastated and burnt out shell – an army guard sweeps at the tons of wreckage with a straw broom, his lone companion has his arm in a sling and is

the satanic sun. Enthusiasm also rises, with young rebels showing up. They kick-start the rally – now a couple hundred. Chants from each and all: ‘Revolution Till We Win,’ ‘The Blood of the Dead Will Not Dry When You Vote,’ ‘Why Keep Silent, You Want Mubarak Back?’ In the centre of the expanding mob are the mothers of the martyrs, who cry out over and over, ‘Where are My Dead Son’s Rights?’

The motor of chanting and clapping has whipped the hundreds now, into frenzy; the dividers separating us from the road which circles the square are thrown down by young rowdies who begin covering their faces with their headscarfs. The people without hesitation surge out onto the busy street. The freshly returned police are quick to move in and nab three specific young men and attempt to hurry them away; this propels people deeper into the turnabout, charging after the cops. A vanguard of hoodlums arm themselves with sticks and what is left of the remaining cobble stones. I instinctively fall in with them as they swoop down on the pigs trying to engulf them. A stragglng cop has his head caved in with sticks as his fleeing buddies are pelted with rocks. The comrades are easily dearrested and the square has been reoccupied now by a thousand at least. Jubilantly, barricades are built, by the young and old, workers and the poor, Muslim and Christian, men and women, and a life lived not so long ago in this site is brought back into existence.

In one part of the square – half of which is now totally occupied, a group of Muslims put down sheets of newspaper as prayer mats. A makeshift stage is constructed to prop up an amman who drowns on at length in a megaphone under the noon sun. From the surrounding side streets waves of folk exiting mosques flood in. The military makes moves to divide the protest, all advances fail as the girth of the crowd consume their lines; or in one case a massive tarp is unfurled over their helmets and is frantically jostled by dozens on all sides. Children cut between the troops mocking them with insults. Vendors set up shop amongst the throng, and the

fragments of intifada in tunisia and egypt

march 2011

In the breaking morning, the Bourguiba boulevard in central Tunisia is silenced and pink. The silver razor wire coils the buildings, fortified behind anti-riot gates, where the soldiers smoke, leaning against the tanks – a civil war inertia. The steel shutters are bombarded with graffiti, among the Arabic – ‘libre’. The advertising booths have systematically been smashed out by rioters, around the edges sharp fragments of glass remain, framing the relation of power. A beautiful storm has come.

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What kind of revolution is this, what other kinds of revolution can exist but the transfer of power? Here the ministries remain in the rubble of their former glory, symbolically trying to institutionalize the crisis. Don’t look for the transfer of power in these razor wire barricades; in this rupture, power transversed these brick manors and constituted itself as counter power – a rearrangement of the balance of power; through the potentiality (potentia) of the multitude – a counter power that does not constitute itself in institutions, but de-

stituent's institutions, ebbing the power of state out into the streets, hurling rocks at concessions – the emergent potentia grows more radiantly into a new reality. Upon the high school entrance, which is positioned beside the government square so that the smoke pit is literally in the centre of the action, greets all who enter with the lesson won by the youth – A.C.A.B. (All Cops Are Bastards).

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The break from power took infinite manifestations; one materialization of popular force was the ransacking of the elites homes, offices, cars – the literal looting of dominion translates naturally into a desire to empty all institutions of their worth. It is clear these targets had long been marked; waiting only for the social detonation.

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I did doubt – but no longer, the truth that the revolutionary suicide of the street vendor, Mohamed Bouazizi, ignited the revolt. I see now an army of street vendors, I see them by the thousands, the slum children all grown up, charismatically soliciting from between heaping tables and carts, each massive and young – selling the black market in claps and chants, hawking imitation brand cigarettes, knock off perfumes, fake designer jeans; I see now how they would have converged and stormed the streets uniformed in their trademark black leather jackets, shoulder to shoulder by the thousands – a strike, a wildcat strike of precarious workers – striking at the flabby bourgeoisie who run the white market. A precariousness not of the margin, but as the nucleus of a common existence that's peripherality has now consumed the centre. Not a weakness – but a power; born of the street. A popular power now of the streets – ignited by the most extreme trajectory of human strike. I can see how instantly it must have leaped; from stand to stand they rose and brought everyone with them.

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The cop shop slumps: burnt out and smashed up; the jaws of power have had its teeth kicked in – shards of which

number. Centuries of colonial exploitation will be repaid, one way or another. Europe is weakening; wall after wall falls. The barbarians have no allegiance to any empire, and seek the destruction of all empire. Free movement, jobs and housing – the demands of the barbarians are joined by the ghetto dwellers who open their arms and invite them into their ranks.

From here, looking out onto the Mediterranean, now a ring of fire, the cheers of freedom are transmitted around the world, fanning the flames. Of course the fire did not start here – it grew out from under the earth, the land, the sea – the things that connect us all. The Tunisian front has previously been a bastion of revolt, which spread out. Following their anti-colonial struggles in the fifties, Tunisia was used as a base to stage operations in neighboring Algeria. Rebel radios, like today, blasted beams of revolt to the wretched of the earth. When Franz Fanon – doctor, theorist, rebel – died, his body was smuggled from Tunisia to Algeria. It is that spirit that represents violent struggle, which is being smuggled again out of here. Again, the wretched of the earth hear the songs and slogans of revolt, and again spontaneously rise as one, a multitude that is shaking off oppression once and for all.

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The plane from Tunis to Cairo is filled almost entirely with Libyans fleeing Gaddafi forces. In the sanctuary of the cabin they unfurl dozens of rebel flags and their songs turn to weeping, wailing and gnashing of teeth. The man in front of me sobs in his seat. He tells me he will not live life as a refugee but will return to reclaim his country.

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Young dawn stretches her rose-red fingers out across the land of the lotus-eaters. The morning in Tahrir Square is hot already. The smell of the charred remains of the extinct government's headquarters wafts through the stagnant heat. Dozens are here to protest the referendum tomorrow, which seeks to legitimize the military's sham democracy. The small group grows in size with the rise of

serpentine side-alleys.

Between the vapor of tear gas and the Marlboro cigarettes, I'm breathing heavy. And the rain is fucking freezing. As I'm about to abandon myself to being lost, I make out the boulevard ahead. Practically alone now, I speed walk forward. Arriving at the site of the mass demos, expecting to find it under occupation, instead to my great joy the boulevard is swarming with people, massed into great configurations, everyone extremely excited. It is a spontaneous open assembly. Hundreds of folk gesture wildly with their hands. Each cluster, numbering between a few to many are singularly posed in debate. I ping pong from one fractal to another. Although some are speaking in agitation, there is no hostility. The men lower their voices when the women speak – or make room in the centre for them to move in so that all might hear. The police are nowhere to be seen; neither are the vendors – though both are the subject of these forms. The rain stops and the sun cuts across our faces. I follow behind a group heading in the direction of my hotel. The sidewalks are stripped of the vendors that spilled over them. Night is coming. The street takes a deep breath.

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On the northern most tip of Tunisia, closest to Europe, is Bizerte, spearheading out into the Mediterranean Sea. From the ancient port, thousands, tens of thousands of young men and a few women take flight in boats that all too often capsize. Those who make it, now having taken advantage of a no longer functioning border police, traverse the violent waves to Italy, where like so many modern-day Hannibals they lay siege to Rome – threatening at the gates. This new Punic war has become vast. Legions from the south, no longer on elephant or under the flag of Carthage, storm the northern fortress states of Europe. The migrant. The nomad. Comes with nothing and demands everything. City slums are exploding with such rootless voyagers. The police actions meant to dislodge them result in riots and dispersion – and still more come and their desire strengthens in

are still being swept up by a legion of old men with broken brooms. Wrung in razor wire and tanks – an exquisite failure in projecting command. Many who pass smile; the young gesture to each other their deeds in throwing motions. Once the monopoly of violence has been shattered, the force of the state is just an image they attempt to reproduce. The power of the street is not held by a static show of force, such displays only affirm what the street already knows. It can rupture at any corner, engulf any street and spread down all the boulevards. The power that simmered under the ash will not be doused – the ash has been blown away; and as the flame now flickers, it can spontaneously combust. That is why parked on most streets sit vans and tanks of pigs – as if they could extinguish what is burning the world down.



Abdallah Guech Alley is the self-proclaimed red light district. A week ago it was besieged by a mob of chauvinistic Islamists chanting, 'No prostitution in a Muslim country.' Their demands were rained upon by a torrent of projectiles and insults from the women at windows above them. Finally forced out, the neighborhood reasserted its autonomy in a new political reality; not defending itself as a zone of sex trade – although concisely choosing to remain as such, but asserting community self

defense – so as to collectively make such decisions. It is not just hopeful but practical that other such communities of the medina do the same, constructing a loosely weaved affinity of the kashba , grounded in autonomy. Only the social war will flush this out.

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In front of the shops a fight with sticks break out; the men are clearly aligned in two groups against one another. I duck just as a guy dressed for banking, gets bashed into a parked car. The bourgeoisie – that is who these guys represent in their distinguished outfits, are becoming the realization of themselves. Aside from sectarian strife, they are flush with the euphoria of parliament victory. The state moves in the direction of reforms, so insisted by the middle class; they speak and are heard; but in their hysterics they abandon the power that brought them the privilege to transmit capital themselves, no longer subservient to authoritarian nepotism, the disincluded have been recast adrift, as if they would vanish into the horizon. But they have not; they are everywhere and hear nothing. When the bourgeoisie speak to power it is in a language they share, one crafted by the exclusion of the poor: the disincluded have no words to bargain with command and cannot hear the condolences of the middle class; they are left with the street to mediate their revolt, and as they demand nothing they speak with violence. As desperately as spectacle tried to reify the insurrection into the discourse of pacifism – it was not Facebook by which the poor communicated, but by the smoke signals of burning barricades and inflamed buildings– the communication of destruction. It is this violence, and not the violence committed over splitting the spoils, that the bourgeoisie will succumb – that or begin building terms of communication that are acceptable to the emergent disincluded.

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And what of the sites of revolt. I have toured the locations that were beamed across the spectacle: the boulevard and the government squares; I will here

stand still. Behind them the countryside bleeds out into the desert.

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I return to Tunis to a battle between the police and street vendors. The police for the first time are on the outside of the wire and are chaperoned by the military, not the bored conscripts, but special forces – in black ski masks and heavily armed. Together they attack the many who are selling trinkets on the streets. With large wooden sticks the police smash the wares and bark at the terrified sellers. These streets are lined with the older poor and country poor, no match for the police who are themselves just warming up for bigger game. Realizing where their forces are heading to converge, I take off to beat them to the train station market square.

I make it before they arrive but I am met by a line of riot police who are forming a line to one side of the square. Then come the military from the opposite direction. The vendors who remain number just over a hundred or so and seeing how vastly outmatched they are becoming, they hurry their commerce into giant sacks and cardboard boxes. Finally the assault team is positioned, the leader bellowing orders through a megaphone. It begins to rain. Cops rush the square in teams and snatch specific people; other pigs smash tables into smithereens. A single teargas canister is fired into the far corner of the square. The gas is suppressed by the rain, only a small puff blows away. The military in line marches in lockstep. There is a rush, not panic, but fleeing from such force. I move with the mob, flanked on all sides by black leather. We rush through the adjourning bus terminal which is a large open space with slippery-as-hell tracks. Making it out onto the streets, boxes and carts too burdensome are thrown out onto the road as barricades. All around me is the smashing of storefront windows by vendors who determine those in need of a smash and those not, and residents and shopkeepers leaping into doorways. We move up the street, fast. The thick wall of cheap leather thinning out from around me. The vendors are dispersing down the

At six at night all people come out and with guns control the houses. We go to the government building and set it on fire, so the police cannot go. The tires of cars on fire to close the streets because the policeman cannot see when he take pictures. We are not afraid. Many fires, yes, many. Close the roads, block all the streets! We stayed there. When the policeman come, we fight him. When he can't come- we go to him in violence. This went for a week.

We have a curfew; all people come out with their guns. We protect our homes. Fight police, and the mafia of Ben Ali- who have guns and snipers. We fight them, and give them to the military. We find eight cars; we stop them - full of mafia, many guns of Ben Ali. He can't kill many people, because we have strategy. We have a program to control.

We do fire in the streets, we have guns and we do coffee and smoke cigarettes together; we have couscous - we cooking on fire. We have festival, very great!

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A system of Order smashed. The shards edges slice in all directions. I try to get into Kassirine centre, site of the most extreme violence in the country during the initial insurrection, but military and communard barricades stop me both at once. No non-resident is allowed entry. I'm told, the residents are sweeping out an infiltration of provocateurs. In the surrounding network of villages, every point is pressed. If the street is not barred by barbed wire then there is a human blockade on strike. Workers demanding back pay from bosses who have fled, engulf the city centre. Poor peasants demand free health services, immediately - they pound so at the gate. The unemployed circle the square, sitting and standing; speaking and silent- the many colors of their cloths are beautiful. At the high school the students walk out cause they don't wanna do a test, they too fill the streets. A military helicopter blasts past overhead, momentarily overpowering the cry of songbirds that screech atop the echoing call to prayer. My head swirls dervishly. The 'garbage of the revolution' piled up into mounds of burnt wood and plastic reek. Only the ruins, crisp and golden -

position them together, distinct from the sites I have come now to investigate: the vendor's square and the red light district. The boulevard and government square are both colonial centers made to celebrate and solidify French power; that the mass mobilizations took place here was pragmatic for their size and political in their targets. Both locations are now occupied by the military and encased in razor wire. Along the boulevard, the children of the bourgeoisie shop; in front the government compounds; where once a protest city inhabited by the thousands who poured in from the country side in a liberation caravan, remains only at times, petitioners of the state - political cadres and destitute peasants seeking restitution. Both these sites following the mass uprising are continuously attacked in spontaneous riots that shatter the encroaching peace.

The insurgents are not of those places; but located in a peripheral forcing itself upon the centre. The vendor square has expanded and taken the whole courtyard of the train station and surrounding streets; their territorial appropriation is marked by black stains of flames that torched the building, inside all glass is smashed and graffiti saturates. The hustling of black market commodities necessitates the capture of territory and such illegalism operating as a norm in turn creates a different function of commerce. That the uprising ruptured from this site, and others like it, one can surmise that these precarious workers are of a variant political reality then that inhabited by criminal middlemen. This situation, which was the ultimate site of intervention, permeates with a revolutionary thinking and action - one that outthinks capitalism and attacks it. From this situation and potentiality, the immanent capacity of life itself is unleashed; a power unfixed and not of capital; but produced by social relations and transverse of the state and consisting of a counter power that is able to hold its own and expand territorially. It is a war machine.

Similar but different is the red light alley. Similar in it is cheating capital at its own game - by inverting the

commodity fetish; but different to the roaming vendors in its fixed location. The transference from stroll to barracks is one of multiple dual relations. Having now to defend itself from Islamists, the stroll has erected barricades and gated the front of the alley with large metal doors adorned with defensive shards of glass. But the gate swings freely open and I stroll awkwardly through; each woman steps out from the doorway, each room uniformly the same; here there are no pimps and no cops; their methods of harm reduction are visible. I am heartbroken thinking of the massacre of lives back home; how different women's survival in the sex trade would be if anything like this was created and defended.

These are singular situations of resistance; situations where autonomous forms of existence can both attack the state and spread through society; there is an infinite amount of such realities being produced; and each reinforcing one another; it is such a wildfire that will outlast the revolution.

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One of the most grotesque scams of the upcoming elections was made clear to me by a new friend who organizes with Essalem (women's hands), a collective of mutual aid and solidarity, a self-governing group of women from all over Tunisia. She told me that although she never voted under the dictatorship, she believes it is necessary now, so as to deprive the Islamists. But using one's vote as a tool in the social war tightens the bolts of the state. As popular democracy asserts itself, this contradiction seems less as such, and more the nature of the beast.

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Sharing commonalities to the current intifadas, in that both are chain reaction conductors, are the European revolts of the nineteenth century. Marx, who was at that time an agent in the secret society, League of the Just (prior to denouncing the Blanquists for their secret society and their 'mystifications of barricades'), had chance to

policeman. The people love each other and are one against the policeman.

Here, in the country it happened first – then in Tunis. The cause of the revolution is because policemen beat a man who was working in the street to buy everything for his family because he is poor. He finished education, but can't find a job. So, this police beat this man. When he goes to administration, the manager said, 'you are poor – I will not see you,' so he set fire to himself. Then explode all of Tunisia; the centre, the north, the south, all the world – explode.

Here in Kassirine the police kill fifty-five, sixty men and women. Here I show you a picture of a man who died in the revolution.

This happened over one month and fifteen days. For the first days we fight the police and then the military comes in and controls the police, so we stop fighting and control our houses in the night. Community control. The people take guns so to control. Revolutionary control.

We put forward our program; we take our ideas and write them and give them to the administration. We talk to each other and make a great program for the future. To have new culture. To change our lives. We like to change the constitution of our being.

We had violence in our school – a battle between the police and the pupils, because the police march into our school and punch the girls to punish. We have a girl out of school – the police beat her, so the boys come out and beat the policeman, because we have many girls who go to hospital.

We attack with molotovs and bricks; you can see it on facebook.

At first we are studying in class and we listen a noise of tear gas, so we go out to see a policeman who fights a girl, so we fight these police to go out of school. We beat the police; we punish him with our hands and the tables of the school, with chairs, with windows!

final stretch, three such nomads are crammed beside me in this minivan. They are 'from the south, where there is only sand'; we compete in looking out the window – they smell pleasantly of cigarettes and jasmine.

Sbeitla – the near centre of Tunisia. The countryside. This area saw the most intense fighting; the town is encircled by military but there are no police. This fact is repeated in celebration by three young insurgents who have taken me in as a friend. I'm shown the sites of their riots – the broken windows and signature black burns attest to their battles. The restaurants of the rich is in ruins. All over are mounds of 'revolutionary garbage' comprised of the barricades and charred derby of street fighting.

We sneak into a vast archeological wasteland, amongst the ruins of these empires, I am seated in a massive amphitheater from the first century. The most jubilant of the three is an actor and takes the ancient stage. He performs a pantomime of a man visited by his elder and younger self. I believe he choose this skit, consciously or not, to reinforce what he had been telling me earlier: they are a new people now, but very close to history – the revolution has given them a future. The eternity he acts out now on this stage – and the insurrection he reenacted earlier, swim across the universe. Like the nomad there is no fixed position, but transcending lines of flight. Isabelle Eberhardt, a transgendered nomad who a hundred years ago made her way through this land, spoke of the chorus that accompanies this play before me: 'for me, it seems that by advancing into unknown territories, I enter into my own life.' These young guys are creating their new life out of a destroyed world.

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'On the first day we fight the policeman because he beat our girls and women. In the street we beat the policeman because he beat our mother, our father- so we beat the policeman so that he go out of our country. The majority of the people came out into the streets and beat policeman. And the military be with the people against the policeman. People came out and sing together against the

comment: seeing these revolts as bourgeoisie revolutions and believing that to be the natural-state-of-things; he advocated that the proletariat maintain their vengeance in the streets and that the workers' parties take advantage of this turmoil to destabilize the new government all the more with revolutionary demands; failing to deliver, the workers' parties would advance and seize the power the bourgeoisie could not hold. Lenin picks up this thread spun by his icon; he too prophesies the petty bourgeoisie utopia that follows the revolution; keeping in lockstep, he advances the submission of the armed proletariat to the vanguard party; as it is 'an anarchist dream that people could act concisely on their own.'

All this aside, he brings forward the crucial imperative: the smashing of the state by the armed proletariat and its withering away as a unifying totality. Understanding this historical failure of 'perfecting the machine instead of smashing it' is obviously not enough for the Marxist traditionalists. In a letter to a Tunisian friend, Antonio Negri – the emissary of empire, gargles the Leninist bile in calling for new institutions to replace the old; these of course are to be controlled by new bureaucrats and civil servants. He does not address how these 'insurrectionary institutions' would assist the withering away of the state as opposed to its obvious perfecting. The redistribution of power throughout the apparatus of state is only that. What we see happening outside the fantasia of the ideological-cadres is the total abandonment of the state. Following the insurrectionary smashing, the state in its irrelevance in daily life is left to wither; as arbitrator of relations it is torn asunder by new affinities that relate on common terms; a re-communalization constituted upon mutual aid in a multitude of perennial modes.

This is the potentiality of the intifada, which itself translates to shaking off. The multitude is shaking off the state and leaving it in the gutter to wither away. As much to fear as the interim government, which seeks to make 'the existing society as tolerable and comfortable for themselves as possible,' is the real threat of the

reconstitution of the state through postmodern institutions, which desire the 'extension of insurrection in an institutional process that transforms the fabric of social being' (Negri). Contrarily, the intifada is a process of collective decision making; through which, consciousness insurrection both smashes the state while dualistically, in the multitudes general abandonment of the states unifying forces, takes flight in the direction of its withering it away.

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Tunisia is in revolt, a mass social rupture. On the national scale, it is petty bourgeoisie in nature, as their interests are mediated by the state through the mechanism of superficial transformation: the interim government. At the same time, operating molecularly against the nation state, are the singular acts of revolt that create a nexus of insurrection, each specific to their horizons and all with their own dialect. Here in Mahidina, ancient and flanked by the sea – the moment of insurrection ruptured with the mass upheaval in the prison. Sensing the pitch of rebellion throughout the country, the inmates took the initiative and seized control of the prison. The riot left seventeen comrades dead before they could succeed in occupying the whole building and forcing the warden to open the gate. Over a thousand took flight.

I have pilgrimaged to this site and in retrospect my being apprehended by the anti-terror police seems obvious. Forcing me into their office within the prison, they made me erase my photos before doing an i.d check. From what I was joyfully able to observe, the prison was totally empty, only screws guarding other screws. A pile of burnt mattresses in the courtyard.

Having had to undergo the same questions from officials presiding over various agencies, I gained an appreciation for the fact that not only did the insurgents escape the confines of the prison, but they liberated each other from this apparatus of capture; one that institutes itself as an assemblage of controls, each conspired to rule ones bare life entirely. Here, like all other prison-societies, the

inmate is 'released' into a quagmire of authoritarian voids. Remanded into a world of surveillances and bureaucratic internment; the inmate is subject to the mirror reality of inside and outside. Transversing these confines in insurrectionary flight sets fire to the prisons and their networks of power. To be free of the state is to escape its totality – total liberation obtained concisely through insurrectionary violence – it can happen in no other way.

Across Tunisia now successive escapes follow one another through the walls and over them; beyond the empty cells a new society is made from consistent evasion and harboring. In most cases the prisoners liberate themselves, in others, the prison is laid siege from without, forcing the guards to withdraw – both situations made into concrete reality by the popular counter power that detains the states forces in a fight for its own survival.

As I am shuffled from one screw escort to another screw, piled into a cruiser and delivered back to my hotel, as I exit I laugh in the face of the cop who requests only that now upon my safe return, I friend him on Facebook.

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There is a notion that the intifada is about food, that the insurrection is a food riot. The ancient formula made by Lucan, the poet who wrote of Rome's civil war that was fought on this shore, has been echoed since, 'Revolutions are caused by hunger, and a government prepared to feed the easy-going masses can count on loyalty; starve the mob, and it grows reckless.' Countering this mantra, Franz Fanon said on behalf of the Wretched of the Earth during the Algerian anti-colonial war, 'Hunger with dignity is preferable to bread eaten in slavery.' But what if both notions are as limiting as all other attempts to categorize revolt into imperatives. What if the multitude desires bread and roses, and whatever the fuck else we so desire.

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Deeper in the shit now. Brought here in a series of 'louges'; aside from camels they are the nomads' transport. In the